Defence co-operation with Japan

2782. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Japan propose to purse co-operation in the defence and security domain, to promote stability and prosperity in Asia and in the world at large;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are the centrepieces of the co-operative mechanism?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) There exists an ongoing bilateral defence cooperation between India and Japan to the mutual benefit of the two countries and towards ensuring regional stability. As part of this ongoing defence cooperation, Raksha Mantri visited Japan from May 25-28, 2006. During his visit to Japan, Raksha Mantri held discussions with among others, Japanese Minister of State for Defence. The discussions covered bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interests, broad objectives of India Japan cooperation in defence and security aspects including maritime security.

Purchase of MI-17 Copters

2783. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to buy Mi-17 copters for the Indian Air Force;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that India had purchased about 400 Russian helicopters mainly of the Mi-17 and Mi-8 series; and

(d) if so, the performance of these helicopters?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Government constantly review the security environment and accordingly decide to induct appropriate equipment and to make other arrangements for adequate defence preparedness. The purchase of helicopters required for the Air Force is made in accordance with the established Defence Procurement Procedure.

(c) and (d) Helicopters have been purchased from Russia in the past. The performance of these helicopters is satisfactory.